

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 IO-12 DPW-01 RSR-01 /118 W

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R 222329 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 730

INFO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL FRANCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 0703

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, VS, CA

SUBJECT: GOC PARTICIPATION IN ICCS BEYOND X- PLUS 60.

1. IN HOUSE COMMONS MAR 23 EXTAFF MINISTER SHARP WAS ASKED " IN VIEW OF SHELLING VERY CLOSE TO CANADIAN ICCS MEMBERS, HAVE INSTRUCTIONS BEEN GIVEN TO REMOVE THE MEMBERS OF THIS FORCE, AS THEY ARE VIRTUALLY UNARMED, TO LOCATIONS OUT OF RANGE OF VERY PERILOUS POSITION IN WHICH THEY HAVE FOUND THEMSELVES DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS?" SHARP REPLIED THAT CANADIAN CONTINGENT WAS ALL TOGETHER WITH THE HUNGARIANS AND INDONESIANS AT THE SAME PLACE SO QUESTION DOES NOT ONLY RELATE TO THE SECURITY OF CANADIANS. HE SAID " CANADIAN COMMANDER IN VIETNAM IS WELL AWARE OF THE RISK BUT HAS GIVEN NO DIRECTION FOR WITHDRAWALS." AFTER BEING PRESSED ON THE POINT, HE ADDED THAT " IF THE CANADIAN MILITARY COMMANDER IN VIETNAM FEELS THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FOR HIM TO MOVE ANY MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM TO A MORE SECURE PLACE, THAT IS WITHIN HIS DISCRETION."

2. ASKED IF THIS WAS NOT A POLITICAL DECISION, SHARP REPLIED " IF WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO SERVE, WHICH I BELIEVE IS THE
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VIEW OF SOME MEMBERS OF THE PARTY ON THE OTHER SIDE (PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE PARTY), THEN I THINK WE HAVE TO SERVE. IF OUR MILITARY COMMANDER FEELS THAT SOME RISKS MUST BE TAKEN I BELIEVE WE SHOULD GO ALONG WITH HIS JUDGMENT. WE CERTAINLY HAVE GIVEN NO INSTRUCTIONS TO HIM TO CONTINUE IN ANY PLACE OF RISK OR DANGER."

3. SHARP WAS ASKED IF UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVES PRESSED UPON CANADA THE NECESSITY OF THE FORCE (CANADIAN CONTINGENT) BEING CONTINUED, AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS. SHARP REPLIED THAT " THE ATTITUDE OF THE UNITED STATES TOWARD THE CONTINUATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION AND CANADA' S PARTICIPATION IN IT IS WELL KNOWN PUBLICLY. THE AMERICANS HAVE MADE NO SECRET OF THEIR VIEWS. THEY HAVE EXPRESSED THESE VIEWS PUBLICLY. THEY HAVE EXPRESSED THESE VIEWS TO US AND, I AM SURE, TO ALL OTHER MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION."

4. SHARP SAID THAT GOC MUST MAKE DECISION " EARLY IN THE SEEK" ON ICCS PARTICIPATION. " THE MATTER HAS ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSED IN CABINET BUT WE HAVE NOT YET REACHED A CONCLUSION."

5. COMMENT: THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT SHARP HAS DRAWN CERTAIN AMOUNT OF POLITICAL FIRE ON QUESTION OF EXPOSING CANADIAN ICCS MEMBERS TO UNNECESSARY RISK IN VIETNAM. CLEARLY, BOTH IN PARLIAMENT AND IN PUBLIC AS A WHOLE, THERE WOULD BE A STRONG REACTION AGAINST CONTINUED CANADIAN INVOLVEMENT IN ICCS WERE ANY CANADIAN PARTICIPANT SERIOUSLY INJURED OR KILLED. REFERENCE BY SHARP TO SOME OPPOSITION VIEWS IN FAVOR OF CONTINUED PARTICIPATION MAY WELL INDICATE THAT SHARP IS SHOPPING FOR OPPOSITION DEFECTIONS ON ICCS PARTICIPATION ISSUE.

SCHMIDT

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